

**DR. GEORGE TREVELYAN** has always gone out of his way to pay generous tribute to his own teachers; and his eightieth birthday, next Thursday, provides an opportunity for recalling the gifts of Robert Somervell.

In the 1890s Robert Somervell, with George Warner, was responsible for the teaching of history at Harrow. As George Trevelyan has said, "I think I had at Harrow a better historical education than any other schoolboy in England."

At the same time, Mr. Somervell was teaching young Winston Churchill how to write English. In the words of his pupil—"He knew how to do it. He taught it as no one else has ever taught it."

Forty years on, Mr. Somervell's two stars became rivals



DR. G. M. TREVELYAN

Sir Winston's life of Marlborough nearly coincided with Dr. Trevelyan's greatest work, his study of the reign of Queen Anne.

### Marlborough's Battles

This coincidence cut into the sale of Dr. Trevelyan's volumes for, as he himself observed, "people can't always be reading about the Marlborough wars, and of course everyone wanted to read Winston."

Their respect for each other's writing was of the highest, and in 1940 Sir Winston put forward Dr. Trevelyan's name as Master of Trinity College, Cambridge, an appointment "which made my life as happy as anyone's can be during the fall of European civilisation."

Sir Winston has now associated his name with a scheme to found a series of Trevelyan lectures at Cambridge. His publishers meanwhile are marking the occasion with a new illustrated edition of Dr. Trevelyan's famous "History of England."

### Critical Hours

THE twentieth All-Union Congress of the Soviet Communist Party, which opens in Moscow next Tuesday, may be

# PEOPLE and THINGS: By ATTICUS

a dangerous moment for George Malenkov.

Some Western experts believe that Mr. Khrushchev and his lieutenants will take this opportunity of removing Mr. Malenkov from his key post on the Party Presidium, and of eliminating his rival from the high offices which they still hold.

### Arbiter Elegantiarum

One distinction cannot be denied to Mr. Malenkov: that of being the best-dressed man in the Soviet Union. Unlike his colleagues he has considerable elegance, and the cut of his conversation can be as fastidious as the cut of his coat.

He has a taste for Roman poetry, and for distraction, if not for guidance, he sometimes turns to the golden moderation of Horace. He is the only Russian leader who has dined alone at a Western Embassy, and his departure would, if fancy be watched with genuine regret by more than one Western diplomatist.

### Back Your Fancy

IN his last months Lord Trenchard fought against the limitations imposed by blindness and physical weakness with the steadfastness that had characterised his earlier battles. He insisted, despite the painful exertion involved, on answering the telephone himself, and Andrew Boyle, his biographer, tells me that it was only since Christmas that Lord Trenchard ever agreed to use a wheelchair.

Maurice Baring was Lord Trenchard's only really intimate friend, but he relished the frequent visits made by old colleagues and much of his former vigour returned when he reminisced about old struggles. His mind still darted from story to story and his speech, as always, was rich and untidy.

He never relinquished his dominant interest in the Royal Air Force, and the wider doctrine of air power; and on his last visit to Sandown he found that a horse called "Atom Bomb" was entered for the Grand Military Gold Cup. In his own words "I thought it was appropriate that I should back it. I did, and it won."

At the end of his life he still hoped that the British Commonwealth would win the bigger race for air supremacy.

### Private Road

THE Westminster City Council's decision to install fluorescent lighting in Pall Mall and St. James's Street has aroused considerable onco-

tion. Pall Mall, in particular, enjoys its lofty gas globes and splendid if archaic display of flambeaux. Nor is all clubland convinced that the existing arrangements are a danger to safety.

Discussions at inter-secretarial level reveal a wide divergence of views, and one advocate of progress claimed that comparable negotiations were initiated just fifty years ago.

"The proposal then," he said, "was that all motor traffic should be banned from Pall Mall and St. James's."

### Back to Fact

IT had long been a reproach to Burke's Peerage and Baronage contained much that was fiction—fantasies of the sort that were so trenchantly exposed by the late J. Horace Round. Since publication was resumed after the war the present editor, Mr. L. G. Pine, has devoted much time to getting back to fact, and in the new 1956 edition he claims that the process is practically complete, and that of the 7,000-odd pedigrees recorded in the Peerage and its companion volume the Landed Gentry there are not more than seven on which serious disputes now exist among scholars.

This is good work, for Burke is unique in this field by giving the full family tree not only from the first holder of a title but from his earliest recorded ancestor.

I hope that a copy will be sent to the Japanese manufacturer of "Scotch" whisky who used to label his bottles, "As drunk in the House of Lords since 1066."

### Strad for Sale

WHEN Emil Gilels, the Soviet pianist, was in New York some weeks ago, he walked into a shop, drew out a great wad of twenty-dollar bills and bought two pianos.

David Oistrakh, who was also touring America, spent part of his time there inspecting collections of violins; but he was not tempted into the saleroom. Since 1930 he has played on a Stradivarius lent to him from the Soviet State collection.

The London market may prove more alluring. David Oistrakh arrives here next week for a series of concerts, and on February 23 Purdie & Simpson will sell the first Stradivarius to be auctioned in this country for eight years.

The successful bid then was for £2,700. Autolycus tells me that he expects the demand for this fine "lowe pattern"

violin to push the price up to £3,000 and beyond.

### Made in Heaven

MR. ED. MURROW, bright star of American television, has an immense following for his intimate level reveal a wide divergence of views, and one advocate of progress claimed that comparable negotiations were initiated just fifty years ago.

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Recently he "hooked up" with the oleaginous pianist Liberace, whose appeal to America's womanhood is unprecedented since Valentino, sends 200 pilgrims every day on trek to his remarkable house in Beverly Hills. I have seen a film of this interview.

The thirty-five-year-old wonder boy coyly displayed his 152 miniature pianos, his "trophy room," and his swimming pool shaped like a grand piano. Then, asked by Murrow to talk about his matrimonial plans, he asserted that he was waiting for the ideal dream woman. Smiling incessantly in close-up, Liberace went on

to say that he was looking forward to his forthcoming visit to England because he might see Princess Margaret. "We've a lot of tastes in common, Ed," said he, "and, Ed, she's pretty—and single."

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### Going too Far

GENERAL FRANCO's sympathisers in this country have always believed that his regime would eventually mellow.

In recent months they pointed with pride to the literary monthly "Indice," which sold in thousands and was particularly prized in university circles. At the turn of the year it published not only articles on Einstein, Picasso, Thomas Mann and Kierkegaard, but a translation of Whitman's poem on the first Spanish Republic.

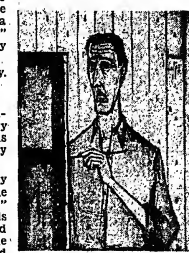
This was clearly too much: Senior Aparicio, the Director-General of the Spanish Press, has now announced that the review, "having exceeded its quota of pages," would cease publication forthwith.

### Buffets and Rewards

THE first Friday in February has become an important date in art, or at any rate in the business of art; for it is then that, according to tradition, Bernard Buffet opens his annual exhibition at the Galerie Drouot-Deauville in Paris.

Buffet, now twenty-eight, is the most successful painter of his generation in the world. Nine years ago he had one crapulous room in the Rue des Batignolles and painted on scraps of bed-linen. Today he is a near-millionaire. The prehistoric Citroën has given way to a Rolls Royce Phantom, the reeking room to an elegant pro-

perty in the Forêt de Montmorency, and the ragged jerseys to a careful choice of Hebridean tweed. A Venetian garden tends the English turf; and although Buffet himself is often too busy to eat, a damasked



BUFFET SELF-PORTRAIT

tabelcloth and glasses of Burano crystal dignity his snacks.

### By the Yard

As appears from his self-portraits (the one which I reproduce is from Mr. Anthony Denney's collection), M. Buffet has not waxed fat on his earnings.

His programme for 1956 includes a commission which will tax even his flair for purposeful elongation. He has agreed to decorate the façade of a new apartment building at Gennevilliers.

"How long is it, actually?" a friend of mine asked him.

"Just over a thousand yards," said Buffet.

### Scoreboard

NOT far from Beverly, in Yorkshire, a signpost bears the legend "Hutton 1."

Just before the great man's retirement an outraged local patriot added to this the words "Not Out."